



## Commonwealth of Kentucky Public Protection Cabinet

Andy Beshear, Governor

Kerry B. Harvey, Secretary

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Ricki Gardenhire**  
**502-782-0767**  
**Ricki.gardenhire@ky.gov**

### **Be Fire Safe this Holiday Season** *Follow simple rules to prevent home fires*

**Frankfort, Ky. (Dec. 16, 2019)** – House fires during the holiday season are more frequent, costly and deadly than at any other time of the year. But, there are safety measures that Kentuckians can take to avoid home fires this season.

“Christmas trees and other holiday decorations are an annual tradition for many, but misuse and neglect can lead to deadly consequences,” said Kentucky Fire Marshal Mike Haney. “It’s important that we take the time to read and follow safety precautions as we dress-up and decorate our homes and businesses for the holidays.”

In fact, between 2013 and 2017, U.S. fire departments responded to an annual average of 160 home structure fires that began with Christmas trees, according to the National Fire Protection Association. These fires caused an average of three deaths, 15 injuries and \$10 million in damages.

If your family’s holiday is not complete without a live tree, consider these precautions:

- Choose a tree with fresh needles that do not fall off when touched.
- Cut 2 inches from the base of the tree prior to placing in stand.
- Do not block exits.
- Add water to the tree stand daily.
- Replace any broken or worn lights.
- Turn off Christmas lights before leaving home or going to bed.

Haney recommends using flameless candles as December is the peak month for home candle fires. If you do burn candles, remember the following:

- Use sturdy candleholders and place on uncluttered surface.
- Snuff out all candles when you leave the room or go to bed. Approximately one-third of home candle fires start in the bedroom.
- Keep children and pets away from candles.
- Never use a candle if oxygen is used in the home.

Other safety tips for holiday decorating and entertaining include choosing flame resistant decorations, using clips instead of nails to hang lights so cords are not damaged, and testing smoke alarms to ensure they are working.

For additional fact sheets on fire safety, visit the Department of Housing, Buildings and Construction's website at <http://dhbc.ky.gov/sfm/Pages/Safety.aspx>.

###

*The Kentucky Department of Housing, Buildings and Construction (HBC) is an agency of the Public Protection Cabinet. HBC enforces statewide standards for building construction. The agency ensures fire and life safety in existing buildings; licenses/certifies plumbers, electricians, boiler contractors, sprinkler and/or fire alarm contractors and building inspectors.*